

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for starting a fuel-cell stack, comprising a plurality of cells supplied by a reformer (10), ~~in which said method comprising the following steps:~~

supplying, when the reformer is cold, a first subassembly (12) of cells of the fuel-cell stack ~~is supplied~~ with reformates from said reformer while a second subassembly of cells of the fuel-cell stack is not supplied with reformates, and then

supplying, when the reformer is hot, the first and second subassemblies of cells of the fuel-cell stack ~~are supplied with reformates from said reformer~~,

wherein the cells of the first subassembly ~~being~~ are optimized for operation with a cold reformer and the cells of the second subassembly (13) ~~being~~ are optimized for operation with a hot reformer.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 1, ~~in which wherein~~ the cells of the second subassembly are only supplied when the said cells are at an appropriate operating temperature.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 1 or 2, ~~in which wherein~~ a cooling circuit (21) common to the first and second subassemblies of cells of the fuel-cell stack is activated when the temperature of the first subassembly of cells reaches a temperature threshold.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A fuel-cell stack system, comprising:
a fuel-cell stack (8) provided with a plurality of cells; ~~and~~

a reformer (10) capable of supplying hydrogen from a hydrocarbon fuel, characterized in that it comprises wherein a first subassembly (12) of cells is optimized to operate with a cold reformer and a second subassembly (13) of cells is optimized to operate with a hot reformer, and

means for supplying reformates from said reformer to said first subassembly of cells while not supplying said second subassembly of cells and for supplying the second subassembly of cells as a function of the reformer temperature.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 4, characterized in that it comprises further comprising means of for supplying the second subassembly of cells as a function of the temperature of the said second subassembly.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 4 or 5, characterized in that it comprises further comprising a cooling circuit (21) common to the first and second subassemblies of cells, in such a way that the heat released by the first subassembly (12) of cells heats the second subassembly (13) of cells when the latter second subassembly is shut down.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 4, further comprising any one of claims 4 to 6, characterized in that it comprises a pilot-controlled valve (17) mounted on a reformate-supply conduit of the second subassembly of cells, a pilot-controlled valve (19) mounted on an air-supply conduit of the second subassembly of cells, and an electronic switch (20) mounted on an output conductor of the second subassembly of cells.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 4, further comprising ~~any one of claims 4 to 7, characterized in that it comprises~~ a central unit (22) provided with means to run a software routine, with a memory and with at least one software routine stored in the memory, the software routine comprising a module to activate a cooling circuit (21) when the temperature of the first subassembly of cells reaches a temperature threshold.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A vehicle comprising a power train with electric motor and a fuel-cell stack system according to claim 4 any one of claims 4 to 8.

Claim 10 (New): A system according to claim 4, wherein said means for supplying comprise a pilot-controlled valve that controls a flow of reformat between said reformer and said second subassembly of cells.

Claim 11 (New): A system according to claim 10, wherein said means for supplying further comprise a fuel reservoir connected to said reformer so as to feed fuel directly to said reformer, wherein said fuel reservoir is not directly connected to said first second subassembly of cells nor to said first second subassembly of cells such that said fuel reservoir does not feed fuel directly to said first second subassembly of cells nor to said first second subassembly of cells.

Claim 12 (New): A system according to claim 4, wherein said means for supplying further comprise means for supplying reformates to the cells of the second subassembly only when the said cells of the second subassembly are at an appropriate operating temperature.

Claim 13 (New): A method according to claim 1, further comprising branching off reformate from a conduit connecting said reformer to said first subassembly so as to supply said reformat from said conduit into said second subassembly.